Book Reviews

outlined and discussed in the Prologue together with those of the 'Maxwellians', a small group of British and Irish physicists who investigated and elaborated Maxwell's theory and had partially anticipated Hertz's discovery. Hertz's association, mainly by correspondence, with Fitzgerald, Heaviside, Lodge and Thompson, and the extent of their influence upon his work, is then dealt with in four separate chapters.

In a final chapter the correspondence of Hertz relating to his visit to London and Cambridge is presented, and the Epilogue refers to his first electrodynamical investigation in 1879. The papers for this were with some others presented to the Science Museum in 1937 by his widow.

The book is illustrated by photographs of Hertz apparatus at the Deutsches Museum, Munich, and use is made of both published and unpublished historical documents and letters, some in German with English translations. In addition to their historical and technical interest they reveal Hertz's modesty about his own achievements and his readiness to pay tribute to others.

For the historian this work provides a wealth of authoritative prime source information with detailed references. Professional engineers and physicists will find the experimental and theoretical investigations into Maxwell's electromagnetic-wave theory of great interest. They will also be impressed by the open-handed and courteous way in which knowledge and experiences were shared with contemporaries.

Apart from some spelling mistakes it is difficult to fault this excellent work. However, although Hertz made no attempt to turn his discovery to practical use, it would have rounded off the book nicely if some more detailed information had been included about the wonderful developments since made possible by Hertzian waves.

BOB GORDON

Hertz and the Maxwellians
J.G. O'Hara and W. Pricha
Peter Peregrinus
1987. 154pp. £24

The event which made Hertz famous, and abolished the old classical theories about the ether, was his discovery in 1888 that electromagnetic waves could be transmitted in free space. This well researched and documented monograph is a centennial tribute to this discovery, and records the history of Hertz's verification of Maxwell's electromagnetic-wave theory.

The course of his investigations into electromagnetic-wave radiation are